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However, since the image-pickup device can offer only a very narrow dynamic range, a resultant image suffers from a narrow latitude (a range of reproduced brightness levels from a highlight to a shadow).

What is essential to reproduce an image despite the narrow dynamic range is an automatic exposure setting (AE) facility that properly determines a condition for exposure optimal to a photographic scene (exposure time (shutter speed) or an f-number). Some proposals have been made for a technology of reproducing an image using the AE facility in the past.

As an example of such a technology, Japanese Patent Unexamined Publication No. 6-38092 describes a technology concerning a video camera that can properly determine a condition for exposure and a photometry method employed in the camera. More particularly, according to the technology, when a value calculated by integrating luminance values that are specified in image information acquired for a photometric period within a horizontal scanning period is judged to fall within a predetermined range, photometry is performed based on the value. Furthermore, the patent unexamined publication describes that if the number of times by which the value calculated by integrating the luminance values is judged to fall outside the predetermined range exceeds a predetermined value, the condition for exposure is